OTROS MUNDOS A.C.
2018 GLOBAL REPORT



I) COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM

The first objective of the Communications Area in *Otros Mundos* is to increase the number of people we reach with the information we produce and share. We saw an increase in traffic of the *Otros Mundos A.C.* website with 71.715 new visits in 2018 (459.079 total visits). We broadened our audience in social networks, reaching 11.972 “likes” on Facebook (+413), 2.685 followers on Twitter (+554), and 118 new subscribers on Telegram (+18). Our monthly bulletin reaches 1.131 people (+31) and we have a mailing list of 377 people (+77) for our “Permanent Seminar on Sustainability”. Our list of media contacts went from 119 to 149, 23 of which are international media.



Our priority is to broadcast information about the way the Extractive Model works and the impacts it has in all territories. As an example, one of our most visited publications this year is the documentary: “Monoculture: the expansion of single-crop cultivation in Latin America” (1.417 visits), which we co-produced with Friends of the Earth International (FoEI) and the Latin American Network against Tree Monocultures (RECOMA). Another highly visited publication is the audio by attorney Claudia Gomez, “Agrarian Social Property: A tool to defend the Territory in Mexico” (1.199 visits), which we produced in April.

In the face of numerous initiatives by the Mexican government to push for a legal framework that increasingly favors the use of national waters by industries, we produced a written analysis and set up a special seminar about the decrees lifting the bans, which were signed by ex-President Enrique Peña Nieto in June, 2018. Additionally, we designed an infographic about water usage in extractivist projects that are carried out in Chiapas; which was created in tandem with the Platform for the Human Right to Water in Chiapas and an article that was published in the report “Public Policy and Fundamental Right to Water in Latin America and the Caribbean” by Friends of the Earth Latin America and the Caribbean.



The “Permanent Seminar on Sustainability” was an important vector to inform the public about the Extractive Model. Throughout 14 round tables and movie debates –presented in the Center for Multidisciplinary Research about Chiapas and the Southern Border (*Centro de Investigaciones Multidisciplinarias sobre Chiapas y la Frontera Sur, CIMSUR*) and in the *Kinoki* Independent Cultural Forum– with an ever growing public (up to 70 attendants) we spanned on topics like the advance of extractivism in Chiapas, Agribusiness, the trap of mini-dams, the Hidroituango disaster, and the Trans-Isthmus train, to name a few. Through these events, in which we had the honor to host guests from other organizations and universities, we produced 14 different materials (including videos, articles, and audios) to broaden the scope of the information beyond these spaces.



Along with the Defense of Land and Territory Area in Otros Mundos A.C., the Communications Area covered the process of resistance of the Chiapas Group against the Extractive Model (*Grupo Chiapaneco contra el Modelo Extractivo*) during their biannual meetings, participating in the collective writing of statements based on the claims and words of the participants. One of them came out in April (“We are living Peoples, Free

from Extractivism!") and the second came out in October ("Organized Peoples of Chiapas declare Resistance against the Capitalistic Energy Model"). We continue to support the *20 de junio* Popular Front for the Defense of Soconusco (*Frente Popular en Defensa del Soconusco "June 20th", FPDS*) in their struggle against mining and criminalization, in particular as they reached their third anniversary, through a press release, a seminar and a solidarity lottery.



Regarding the murder case of anti-mining defender Mariano Abarca, the Communications Area contributed in the process of seeking justice from Chiapas to Canada –which *Otros Mundos A.C.* seeks along with the Abarca family– through putting together three press conferences (one in Mexico City and two in Tuxtla Gutierrez), the production of information materials based on them (notes, videos, audios) and sharing press releases and a seminar in which Mariano's brother participated. Thanks to this conscious and collective work of journalists from Chiapas, Mexico and Canada, our claim against impunity has echoed in the press at the local (*Chiapas Paralelo, Diario de Chiapas*), national (*Aristegui Noticias, La Jornada*) and international (Radio Canada International) levels.



We also supported the demand for justice of the Civic Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (*Consejo Cívico de Organizaciones Populares e Indígenas de Honduras,* COPINH) for the murder of its coordinator Berta Cáceres on March 2nd, 2016. We have produced five informative notes on this topic, particularly during the first trial that was carried out in Honduras. We clearly denounced responsibility of the Atala family –owners of the company *Desarrollos Energéticos S.A.* (*DESA*)– in the crime, as well as the lack of integral justice, and conveyed for the need to capture the intellectual authors. We organized a memorial event commemorating two years of her assassination and a special round table about the trial.

In general, we seek to vindicate our feminist position through our communications, contributing to the dismantling of patriarchy by doing so. In line with these efforts, we covered the feminist march on May 31st, 2018 against feminicide in San Cristóbal de Las Casas and the mobilization of August 8th in favor of abortion. Additionally, we put together a seminar about the link between environmental justice and anti-patriarchal struggles and included the question of women's rights in the debate about the government's decrees.

II) DEFENSE OF THE LAND AND TERRITORY PROGRAM

Resistance against the Extractive Model

This year we continued to develop, together with FPDS, a strategy for "Free Territories" in the Acacoyagua municipality to prevent the expansion of mining in 18 *ejidos* affected by mining concessions. Three *ejidos* have held assemblies to consult internally about their stance towards mining and their conclusion clearly states that mining is not development nor it is a viable activity in any territory, thus it has been banned in these *ejidos*. The FPDS celebrated its third anniversary and we participated in the "June 20th March" (*Marcha del 20 de junio*) in which neighbor communities took the streets to manifest in favor of the defense of the rivers Cacaluta, Chicol and



Cintalapa and against mining extractive projects. Many other allied organizations from the region also participated in this march.

In the second half of 2018 we began a process of analysis of energy projects threatening the territory: dams, hydroelectric plants, wind farms, and fossil fuels, among others. Along with organizations from the Coast and Highlands regions, we pinpointed the projects, became familiar with the promoters, and reviewed the history of energy privatization along with the lies of the "Energetic Shift" (*Transición Energética*) proposed by the Mexican government and corporations. We observed how projects are painted "green" to mask the interests of corporations that promote them, as well as the advancement of privatization of electric energy in the state of Chiapas. Along with allies from Guatemala we carried out two forums: one in Barillas, Huehuetenango and another in San Marcos, San Marcos to analyze transboundary projects that affect the Usumacinta basin and to recognize the pattern of energy privatization in Mesoamerica. With the organizations from Guatemala we agreed to strengthen bi-national strategies to denounce the Pojom I and II hydroelectric projects, the Isthmus-Guatemala gas pipeline, the Usumacinta dam, and the damage caused by the Hidro Santa Cruz Company in Barillas. We also presented the Movement of People Affected by Dams in Latin America (*Movimiento de Afectados por Represas en Latinoamérica, MAR*), which is a movement that brings together 13 countries struggling against the Extractive Energy Model.

In 2019 we continued to participate in MAR and we working on the political education school for people affected by dam projects; promoted several debates about the capitalistic energy model and the Energetic Shift in different Latin American countries and accompanied the national meeting of Rivers Alive Movement (*Movimiento Ríos Vivos*) in Colombia .

This year we met with organizations and movements whose objective is to fight the capitalist system, and we called this collective the **Chiapas Group against the Extractive Model** (*Grupo Chiapaneco contra el Modelo Extractivo*). This group was created in 2016 and since then we meet twice a year to do context analysis. This year we continued to analyze the Special Economic Zones (SEZ) and began to analyze the National Security Law. Additionally, we reflected upon the capitalistic energy model and the relevance of collective rights in the defense of the territory. As a result we made a statement about the meaning of energy for peoples and how it is opposed to the imposition of the extractive energy model that seeks the exploitation of natural resources such as water and fossil fuels. This year we were enriched through the experience shared by the Zoque People in Defense of Life (*Pueblo Zoque en Defensa de la Vida*) and people from the Jungle region who advocate against the sale and patenting of biodiversity, as it is also part of the extractive and green economy models.



Our national work with the Mexican Network of People Affected by Mining (*Red Mexicana de Afectados por la Minería,* REMA) to move the "Free Territories" strategy forward has resulted in a powerful statement asserting that mining cannot be a part of the plans and projects for development in this country. This was a direct response to the presentation of current president Andrés Manuel López Obrador, who asserted that mining is an economically sound alternative for the country.



Together with REMA, the Abarca family, the Center for Human Rights of the Autonomous University of Chiapas (*Universidad Autónoma de Chiapas*) and Mining Watch, presented a request to the Public Administration Integrity Commissioner of Canada to investigate the Canadian Embassy for their actions and omissions related to the murder of Mariano Abarca. Nine years after this crime, we filed an appeal in the *Segundo Tribunal* of Chiapas bringing attention to the lack of advances in the investigation and the impunity of the murderers. Both processes, in Canada and Mexico, seek to demand justice for the Abarca family, as well as to create a precedent about the actions of the Embassy in promoting mining and Canadian enterprises in the world.

Resistance against Green Economy

We participated in the Friends of the Earth Latin America and the Caribbean (ATALC) meeting with the intention to contribute to a common narrative about the synergies between Agroecology and Community Management of the Territory, sharing elements from practices and knowledge that are reproduced for the survival of peoples and food sovereignty in Latin America. Gathering experiences from nine countries in the region, the intention was to strengthen the analysis of initiatives developed by the people.

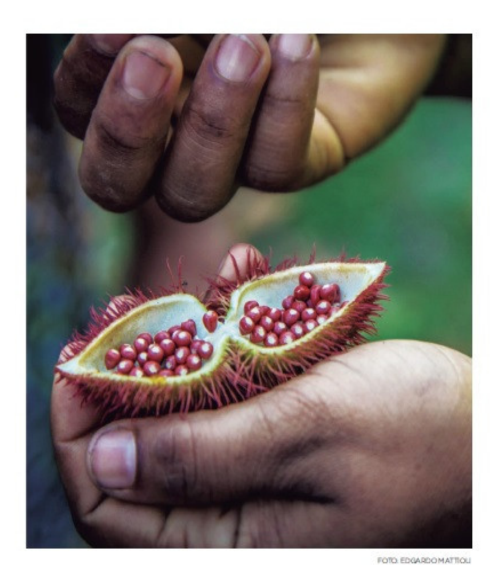
We coordinated the translation into Spanish of the information fact sheet about RSPO, a piece that was done along with Pronatura-Switzerland disclosing the tricks in the certification of Oil Palm. We coordinated the document “Agroecology and Community Management of Forests” for ATALC, shared in the Agribusiness Commodities workshop carried out in Yaunde, Cameroon from June 2-8, 2018. In this workshop, the ATALC’s position was taken about the main products of agribusiness and the processes of land grabbing and collective rights violation. Likewise, we shared the work of each organization, ranging from the topic of seeds to defense of forests.

In addition to linking in the analysis the processes of nature financialization as another form of the Extractive Model, we have succeeded in bringing together defense groups working with forests, water and productive systems with communities that are also defending their land and territory from mining or dams, including the patents topic and traditional knowledge appropriation by big pharmaceuticals into their struggles.

MANEJO COMUNITARIO
DEL TERRITORIO Y
SOBERANÍA ALIMENTARIA



2017



We have also succeeded in the analysis of the new biodiversity law to share the meaning of the changes in this legal framework with communities. We have presented talks in universities dealing with community management of forests and socio-environmental conflict; which has allowed us to engage student organizations, mainly regarding educational programs that include youth who live in indigenous and farming communities.

We participated in the COP-14 of the CBD to follow-up on topics that might endanger the biocultural heritage of peoples, particularly regarding the post 20-20 renegotiation (Aichi Goals), the implementation of the Nagoya and Cartagena protocols, and their effects in the territories.

We have kept up our follow-up and advocacy against the Chiapas-Acre-California agreement in which national groups from Mexico and Brazil have worked alongside FoE USA. In May this year we shared and hosted the process of international capacity building on “Gender and Dismantling Patriarchy” with representatives from around the world. We also coordinated an analysis seminar about the perspectives from different peoples and indigenous communities about feminism and the struggle for the territory, in which Afro-feminist collectives, the Civil Society *Las Abejas de Acteal Kinal Ansetic*, *Agua y Vida,* and student collectives participated.

We coordinated the statement of the Gender and Dismantling Patriarchy working group within Friends of the Earth, which seeks to generate a feminist strategy considering territorial elements and putting these into an international framework such as FoEI.

III) ALTER NATOS PROGRAM



We should point out that, for the last four years, the EPAE (Popular School Water and Energy) has vindicated the participation of women as a collective against the different effects of patriarchy on common natural resources, particularly water. This vindication, in a case of forced displacement in the Highlands region of Chiapas, allowed water to reach places it had been denied by facing it collectively, and thus reacting to solve the problem as a group. To reinforce this, we held gender workshops and built 76 eco-technology units divided into 10 rainwater catchment systems gathering up to 180,000 liters of water, 26 composting toilets, and 40 timber-saving stoves. We do not see this as an accomplishment, but as a possibility to reconstruct the social fabric in which displaced families can improve aspects of their housing and their communities.

To **strengthen** and promote the exchange and sharing of community experiences from different regions of Chiapas, we organized the **third edition of the Eco-technology Fair**, as well as our yearly celebration of **Maize Day**, promoting the use of seeds free from the agribusiness model.

Furthermore, we accompanied women from the Highlands region on March 8th, International Women’s Day, to denounce all that ails women and the oppression they suffer within the patriarchal system considering the military and paramilitary presence in the area. Also, on March 14th we had a demonstration in this region against dams in Chiapas.

As part of our institutional proposal that education should be delivered via popular pedagogy, we have aided the education project Tzotzil Alternative (*Alternativa Tzotzil*), which gathers 45 students from the Highlands region in Yabteclum, Chenalho. The topics we shared included territory, common natural goods, water, diversity, agriculture, and other environment-related areas.

Finally, as part of the popular education materials we created in the Alter Natos Area, we included chapters about GMOs and pesticides on our Agroecology handbook, which contains information on the national situation regarding these issues.



Alter Natos Center

The year 2018 was also dedicated to carry on with the bioconstruction work at Alter Natos. Through periodic visits and tours we have shared with several people from social organizations, community groups, students, and other

collectives, the different processes of the bioconstructive systems included in the permaculture design of Alter Natos (*Otros Mundos A.C.* headquarters). These include an autonomous system for the replenishment and distribution of water via rainfall harvesting, construction systems adapted to the local climate and a waste management plan with filters, gray-waters treatment system, composting, and dry-composting toilets. Alter Natos offers its users the possibility to carry out different activities in a space founded on the respect for nature.

This year we continued strengthening links with collectives, projects, and education institutions such as local, national and international universities; who sent their students to carry out social work, visits, and professional practice in our headquarters. Similarly, we have received the invaluable support of several voluntary workers in the final stage of the construction process.

Alter Natos has already hosted diverse activities such as: the Friends of the Earth International working group meeting on Gender and Dismantling Patriarchy, a training process of Evergreen State College from Washington and a visit from a delegation of the Colorado Denver University.



The main structures and systems of appropriate technology in the Alter Natos Center are still a work in progress, but it is now open to the public to carry out cultural events, educational processes, therapies, exchanges of experiences, seminars, conferences, tours, and guided visits.